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Technical assistance and capacity-building

Supporting effective and inclusive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through effective, coherent and coordinated technical cooperation and capacity-building

Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights*

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 36/28, in which the Council requested the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to prepare a report on how United Nations human rights bodies and mechanisms and United Nations country teams and agencies can, through effective, coherent and coordinated technical assistance and capacity-building in the promotion and protection of human rights, support States in the realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The report contains information on worldwide practices and experiences. It is based on research undertaken by OHCHR on national and regional experiences in technical cooperation and information received from States and from United Nations agencies and programmes.

* The present report was submitted after the deadline in order to reflect the most recent information.

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I. Introduction and methodology

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 36/28, in which the Council requested OHCHR to prepare a report on how United Nations human rights bodies and mechanisms, including the Human Rights Council, the universal periodic review, the special procedures and the treaty bodies, and United Nations country teams and agencies can, through effective, coherent and coordinated technical assistance and capacity-building in the promotion and protection of human rights, support States in the realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In the resolution, the Council requests OHCHR to highlight practical steps and concrete examples that seek to promote policy synergy and coherence, use of technology and innovation, the strengthening of the capacity of national statistical offices and data systems related to human rights where applicable, and ways to enhance national implementation, reporting and follow-up, taking into account the different constraints and needs of States.

2. The present report will serve as a basis for the discussions at the annual thematic panel on technical cooperation, at the Council's thirty-eighth session, which will focus on enhancing human rights technical cooperation and capacity-building to contribute to the effective and inclusive implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

3. In preparing the present report, OHCHR gathered information on different experiences, including methodologies used and lessons learned. OHCHR is grateful for the inputs received from Member States and United Nations entities in the preparation of the report. Those contributions — together with information provided by United Nations country teams, from United Nations human rights bodies and mechanisms[1] and from across OHCHR and its field presences — constitute the basis for the report. Realization of the 2030 Agenda has only recently been set in motion, but as Member States, supported by the United Nations system, move forward with national implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, good practices are emerging. In the present report, which is designed to frame the panel's discussions and facilitate exchanges of views and experiences, OHCHR focuses on concrete examples of how human rights technical cooperation and capacity-building support the realization of the 2030 Agenda and ensure a rights-based implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals that integrates the principle of leaving no one behind. Azerbaijan, Gabon, Greece, Italy, Qatar, the Russian Federation and Thailand submitted information relevant for the preparation of the report.

4. In the report is built on examples of how technical cooperation and capacity-building programmes are supporting States in practical terms in their realization of the 2030 Agenda. Throughout the report, information can be found about the use of guidance tools, and there are examples of efforts to promote synergies and policy coherence between the implementation efforts at the national level and the follow-up to the recommendations of international human rights mechanisms, and examples of methodoiogical support with regard to indicators and data collection in the planning, monitoring, evaluation and follow-up phases.

5. In the report, OHCHR endeavours to identify what can be considered as good practice, and examines opportunities, challenges, gaps, and possible priority areas of focus. Given the limitations on the length of documents, the report cannot be exhaustive. Rather, it is focused on a number of concrete examples that can serve as a basis for the sharing of experiences among States during the panel discussions.

II. Operational framework and policy

6. The 2030 Agenda, which was adopted by consensus by all Member States, is firmly grounded in the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,

[1] Including the Human Rights Council, the universal periodic review, special procedures and the human rights treaty bodies.

the international human rights treaties, and other instruments, including the Declaration on the Right to Development (see para. 10), and is to be implemented in a manner that is consistent with the obligations of States under international law (see para. 18). In the 2030 Agenda, the responsibilities of all States "to respect, protect and promote human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction of any kind as to race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, disability or other status" are emphasized (see para. 19). The pledge to leave no one behind places the human rights principles of equality and non-discrimination at the heart of the 2030 Agenda. Although the Sustainable Development Goals and their targets are not framed explicitly in the language of human rights, many targets reflect key elements of the corresponding human rights standards. For example, the Sustainable Development Goals address the availability, accessibility, affordability and quality of education, health care, water and other services — in line with key elements of economic, social and cultural rights.

7. To support Member States in their implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the United Nations Development Group (now referred to as the United Nations Sustainable Development Group) has prioritized areas of mainstreaming, acceleration and policy support, framing the United Nations development system's support for United Nations country teams for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda through the relevant United Nations Development Assistance Framework. Updated guidance relating to the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, and companion pieces, were published in 2017, reaffirming the assistance framework documents as one of the main vehicles of implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, positioning the United Nations to provide quality support to Member States in their aspiration to achieve the 2030 Agenda, and reinforcing human rights as one of the main programming principles used in the preparation of these documents.

8. Leaving no one behind is at the core of the 2030 Agenda, and it unifies programming and advocacy efforts across all United Nations agendas. It is underpinned by three other programming principles: (a) human rights, gender equality and women's empowerment; (b) sustainability and resilience; and (c) accountability.

9. These principles are grounded in the norms and standards that the United Nations is tasked with upholding and promoting, and that inform all phases of United Nations programming at the country level. They are the foundation for integrated programming in response to national priorities and plans.

10. At the system-wide level, the Shared Framework for Action on Combating Inequalities and Discrimination has been elaborated and published by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination.[2] In that report, the Chief Executives Board reaffirms the commitment of the United Nations to human rights and puts the imperative of combating inequalities and discrimination at the centre of United Nations strategic frameworks and policy guidance to support implementation of the 2030 Agenda. A practical guide for operationalizing the principle of leaving no one behind is also being produced by the United Nations Sustainable Development Group.

III. Experiences and practices in technical cooperation and capacity-building in support of State efforts for the realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

A. Support for policy coherence

11. Enhancing policy coherence is key to support provided to Member States to achieve effective implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and to meet the broad cross-cutting objectives of the 2030 Agenda, including leaving no one behind. A broad

[2] CEB/2016/6/Add.1.

array of policies across different sectors and dimensions of sustainable development will be needed in order to deliver the Goals, and given the integrated nature of the Goals and the interdependencies among the targets, it will be necessary to analyse interactions among different policies, promote mutually reinforcing policy actions, exploit synergies whenever possible, and ensure alignment of the multitude of policy documents and action plans that this will engender. Policy coherence for sustainable development is therefore about processes — from policy design to the monitoring and reviewing of progress made towards achieving the agreed objectives. The United Nations system is providing support and technical cooperation to Member States in these processes.

12. Human rights are placed at the core of the 2030 Agenda by the emphasis in the Agenda on the responsibilities of all States "to respect, protect and promote human rights and fundamental freedoms for all" and the stipulation that the Agenda is to be implemented in a manner that is consistent with the "obligations of States under international law". Meeting these imperatives means that implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals should be consistent with human rights. The ratification of core human rights treaties carries an obligation to report periodically to the treaty bodies, which make recommendations. Together with the recommendations made in the universal periodic review process and by special procedures, data generated through engagement with all those human rights mechanisms can help to guide implementation of the Goals and constitute important evidence for implementation and follow-up processes. Moreover, the recommendations made by the human rights mechanisms can give substance to the analysis of national progress under each target within the Goals, including with regard to ensuring that no one is being left behind. Underpinned by legally binding human rights treaties, human rights norms can ensure accountability in the implementation of the Goals. A human rights-based approach can lead to a deepened understanding of policy coherence for development, by addressing the obstacles to the realization of rights which impede progress towards sustainable development and the eradication of poverty.

13. In the 2030 Agenda, Member States are encouraged to conduct regular and inclusive reviews of progress at the national and subnational levels, which are country-led and country-driven, and to build as far as possible on existing national and local mechanisms and processes, ensuring broad multi-stakeholder participation. Reviews should be based on high-quality data that is accessible, timely, reliable and disaggregated. Many States are adopting national strategies and national review mechanisms or processes for implementation and follow-up in respect of the Sustainable Development Goals, including as regards how to consult with other stakeholders in these processes. At the same time, many States have already established some form of national mechanism for monitoring and reporting and follow up on human rights treaties. The United Nations system, including OHCHR, is providing Member States, at their request, with technical cooperation and capacity-building in order to build synergies and linkages between these different follow-up and reporting mechanisms, procedures and processes for the Sustainable Development Goals and human rights. Drawing on existing human rights mechanisms will ease the reporting burden of States, ensure meaningful participation by rights holders, and enhance coherence, efficiency and accountability. Examples of national mechanisms for monitoring, reporting and follow-up show that clustering hundreds of recommendations emanating from the human rights mechanisms by theme often narrows the scope of those recommendations down to 10–20 core priorities, and allows States to frame their national action plans accordingly. Expanding or enhancing this clustering around the Sustainable Development Goals could help to support reporting on the Goals by building on complementarities, and also streamline the process of domestic implementation. Recent experiences (such as those of Ecuador and Paraguay) illustrate these synergies.

14. The guidance provided by the United Nations Development Group has led to the development of a new generation of United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks, which reflects evolving responsiveness to the 2030 Agenda and support for Member States on implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. According to an internal review, all United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks signed as at September 2017 responded directly to the call for United Nations support for the 2030 Agenda, and to integrate human rights into planning. Through OHCHR-led efforts to mainstream human rights into United Nations work at the global and country levels, United Nations country

teams have increased their capacity to apply a human rights-based approach, which can help to support Member States in building synergies at the country level. United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks and other United Nations planning documents, in a number of countries, have integrated human rights concepts and mainstreamed recommendations issued by the international human rights mechanisms, and have highlighted linkages between the Sustainable Development Goals and human rights. The OHCHR Regional Office for South America has developed a matrix linking the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and their targets and indicators with the recommendations issued as part of the universal periodic review process and by special procedures and treaty bodies, in relation to the countries of the region. As a result, the 2017–2021 United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks of Brazil and Peru incorporate a matrix that matches each strategic outcome of the framework to relevant Sustainable Development Goals and recommendations from the human rights mechanisms.

15. The United Nations can support enhanced policy coherence by assisting with aligning strategies and plans, ensuring that nobody is left behind, and identifying synergies between human rights obligations and Sustainable Development Goals. As experience from several countries shows, OHCHR capacity-building activities, coupled with advocacy by United Nations country teams, can result in the human rights mechanisms' recommendations being mainstreamed in national action plans and can inform the process of implementing and reporting on the Goals. Uzbekistan integrated the recommendation of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on enhancing women's participation in public affairs in its State Programme for the Implementation of the Development Action Strategy for 2017–2021. On the basis of the same Committee's recommendations, Tajikistan incorporated prevention of violence against women and girls as a sub-priority of its National Development Strategy for 2016–2030, and developed an action plan on implementing the Committee's recommendations. The National Action Plan on gender parity for 2018–2020, of Kyrgyzstan, incorporates the Committee's concluding observations, the agreed conclusions of the Commission on the Status of Women, and the Sustainable Development Goals and provides for a national monitoring mechanism and the participatory development of sectoral and regional gender action plans.

16. The 2030 Agenda also provides new avenues for cooperation among States. The growing interest of Member States in South-South and triangular cooperation opens doors to new and innovative opportunities to further the rights-based implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. Noteworthy in this respect is the "Sufficiency Economy Philosophy for the Sustainable Development Goals Partnership" initiative, of King Bhumibol of Thailand. There are currently such partnership projects with 20 countries in the Asia-Pacific region and in Africa, such as Fiji, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Timor-Leste and Tonga, and Benin, Lesotho, Mozambique and Senegal, which promote the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and of human rights in areas including the right to food, the right to health, the right to development. The Ministerial Declaration of the Group of 77 and China in 2016 recognized the value of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy as a practical approach that could support the implementation and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals — underscored by its successful application in various development projects in a number of Group of 77 countries.

B. Operationalizing the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and human rights through information management

17. The Universal Human Rights Index, which is a database of recommendations from all United Nations human rights mechanisms, now also has links to the Sustainable Development Goals. In April 2018, as part of an agreement between OHCHR and the Danish Institute for Human Rights, a database was launched linking human rights recommendations to the Sustainable Development Goals. Still a pilot project at this stage, it links the more than 50,000 recommendations made during the first and second cycles of the universal periodic review to specific Sustainable Development Goals. The database allows States to address these recommendations as part of their implementation of the Sustainable

Development Goals, thereby giving them integrated and efficient approaches to achieving the Goals and human rights.

18. In Paraguay, the online database for following up on the recommendations of the international human rights mechanisms (known by the acronym SIMORE) was expanded in December 2017 to link human rights recommendations and the Sustainable Development Goals and their targets. Additionally, SIMORE Plus has a new feature called OSC-Plus, through which civil society organizations can monitor the follow-up to each recommendation and can provide comments and observations — creating the first dialogue space between the various stakeholders involved in the implementation and monitoring of recommendations and of the Sustainable Development Goals. SIMORE Plus has given rise to South-South cooperation, with the system being replicated in a number of countries in the region (namely Bolivia (Plurinational State of), the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala and Honduras) with the cooperation of the Government of Paraguay and with technical advice provided by OHCHR. In the Dominican Republic, a similar tool was launched to facilitate monitoring of the implementation of recommendations, and the elaboration of periodic reports to the United Nations human rights mechanisms, and to allow civil society and human rights organizations to monitor the actions undertaken by the Government to comply with its international obligations. The system is the first of its kind in the Caribbean.

19. To highlight how the Sustainable Development Goals and the Convention on the Rights of the Child complement each other, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has developed a comprehensive mapping of the Sustainable Development Goals and their targets against the articles of the Convention.[3] The mapping shows the multiple levels of connection between the two, and how the implementation of the Goals will support the implementation of child rights. It shows the more obvious links in areas such as health, education and violence, but also shows that all of the Goals are relevant for children and their rights, not only the Goals that specifically refer to children. OHCHR has also produced a mapping of the interlinkages between the Sustainable Development Goals and the human rights treaties, and has mapped all the targets within the Sustainable Development Goals against relevant Universal Declaration of Human Rights provisions; this is being used to assist Member States in identifying how to ensure that the Goals are implemented in line with Member States' human rights obligations.

C. Use of human rights indicators and data disaggregation

20. The use of human rights indicators, as well as of disaggregated data, helps unpack key overarching principles, such as leaving no one behind, and helps measure progress in the achievement of the Goals. OHCHR has developed guidance tools to support policymakers, statisticians and data specialists in government agencies, national human rights institutions, equality bodies and civil society organizations in order to ensure that respect, protection and fulfilment of human rights materialize in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

21. The Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators, created under the auspices of the United Nations Statistical Commission, has identified a robust set of 232 unique indicators to monitor progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The indicators were agreed by the Statistical Commission in March 2017 and approved by the General Assembly in July 2017.[4] In response to a request by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group, OHCHR developed a compendium that links the levels of disaggregation to the grounds of discrimination that are prohibited under international human rights law. The compendium lists the different population groups or characteristics, the relevant universally accepted legal standards, and recommendations from the international human rights mechanisms.[5]

[3] Available at www.unicef.org/agenda2030/files/SDG-CRC_mapping_FINAL.pdf.

[4] See General Assembly resolution 71/313.

[5] Available at www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Indicators/Pages/HRIndicatorsIndex.aspx.

22. The majority of the Sustainable Development Goal indicators adopted by the General Assembly are directly related to indicators that measure the realization of human rights. Overall, a quarter of them explicitly or implicitly address gender equality. The interconnection between human rights and sustainable development has been increasingly recognized in the development of Sustainable Development Goal indicators, including for data disaggregation. Work has advanced in relation to compiling and reporting on Sustainable Development Goal indicators, for which OHCHR has been tasked by Member States as the custodian agency, under the Statistical Commission — including indicators on the prevalence of discrimination, violence against human rights defenders, the existence of national human rights institutions, and conflict-related deaths (not included in traditional homicide statistics). OHCHR, in collaboration with the Danish Institute for Human Rights, has been able to make progress on developing a conceptual and methodological framework for indicator 4.7.1, and more specifically to measure that indicator's human rights education component.

23. In November 2017, the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators approved the request by OHCHR to reclassify the indicator on violence against human rights defenders from tier III to tier II, thus endorsing the proposed methodology.[6] OHCHR had undertaken a first data-collection exercise that drew on multiple sources (e.g. special procedures, treaty bodies, OHCHR press statements and press releases, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) database on killings of journalists, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and non-governmental organizations (NGOs)) and applied a minimum set of data of and verification requirements (e.g. the victim's name, status, sex and age; the date and place of the incident(s); the motivation; and information about the perpetrator).

24. In Mexico, OHCHR supported the development of indicators in the areas of economic, social and cultural rights and justice, and the enhancement of indicators to bring them into line with the Sustainable Development Goals, at the federal level (with the National Institute of Statistics and Geography) and in the states of Coahuila, Oaxaca, Mexico City and Querétaro, and to measure the achievement of a broad set of rights. In Paraguay, human rights indicators based on OHCHR methodology were developed for persons with disabilities, linked to the national action plan on the rights of persons with disabilities adopted in 2015 and to the Sustainable Development Goals. With the technical support of OHCHR, the Secretariat for Social Action designed a set of human rights indicators related to poverty, to economic, social and cultural rights and to social protection, which were linked to the social programmes implemented by the Secretariat. In the Plurinational State of Bolivia, OHCHR supported 70 focal points in line with ministries and experts from the National Institute of Statistics to review and consolidate the human rights indicators developed to date and to coordinate actions necessary to make use of them. In Guatemala, OHCHR organized training workshops on a human rights-based approach to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and human rights indicators, and worked to support and bring together different stakeholders in the areas of the Sustainable Development Goals and human rights in common efforts to strengthen measurement and implementation of the Goals. In Kazakhstan, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) adapted OHCHR-developed human rights indicators in six areas (right not to be subjected to torture; right to participate in public affairs; right to education; right to adequate housing; right to a fair trial; violence against women), which align with Sustainable Development Goal indicators.

25. Expanded availability of disaggregated data, based on prohibited grounds of discrimination, will help to ensure that progress is measured for all groups of rights holders, and is crucial for ensuring that no one gets lost among population averages and therefore gets "left behind".

[6] In the Sustainable Development Goals indicator framework, indicators classified as tier I are said to have both methodology and data available, those classified as tier II are said to have methodology only available, and those classified as tier III are said to have neither methodology nor data available.

26. The "data revolution" for sustainable development must fully embrace not only human rights-sensitive indicators, but also a human rights-based approach to the collection, production, analysis and dissemination of data. To this end, OHCHR has developed a guidance note for Member States. The guidance, on a human rights-based approach to data, brings together a set of principles, recommendations and good practices on data collection and disaggregation, building on the key principles of transparency, privacy, participation, self-identification and accountability. The indicator framework must give effect to the 2030 Agenda's strong commitment to the collection and disaggregation of data to measure progress in leaving no one behind — especially individuals and groups suffering discrimination. Efforts are ongoing to ensure that data is collected and disaggregated by all grounds of discrimination that are prohibited under international human rights law. This includes the development of new partnerships, methods and data sources, including non-traditional data sources.

27. In Kenya, as a result of support provided by OHCHR, the National Bureau of Statistics and the National Commission on Human Rights signed a memorandum of understanding in 2017, which establishes the framework for their institutional collaboration on the development of human rights and Sustainable Development Goals indicators and on data collection. A number of concrete activities have been agreed upon, including a joint review of the Statistics Act of 2006, and preparation for the population and housing census that is due in 2019. The memorandum of understanding will facilitate, over time, the inclusion of Goals 10 and 16 by the National Bureau of Statistics in its measurements, which will in turn realize a full capturing of human rights obligations and concerns. There are plans to replicate the Kenyan experience in other countries, by bringing together data producers and data users, involving them in specific and practical discussions on how they plan to measure the implementation of the Goals and on how they can reinforce each other's work and ensure no one is being left behind and thus contribute to the implementation of national Sustainable Development Goal road maps.

28. In Uganda, planning is under way for a similar project aimed at building the capacity of the national Sustainable Development Goals task force, technical working groups, United Nations agencies, the national human rights institution, civil society organizations and academia on human rights indicators and the human rights-based approach to data, and to explore potential partnerships.

29. The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics has completed a comprehensive mapping of Sustainable Development Goals indicators available in the State of Palestine, which OHCHR has complemented by providing an analysis of the relevance of such indicators for monitoring the implementation of the national policy agenda and the seven human rights treaties that the State of Palestine has acceded to. The Government used the reporting process under the seven treaty bodies to identify priorities and data needs in relation to the congruent human rights treaty provisions, and related priorities in connection with the Sustainable Development Goals and the national policy agenda. The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and the Palestinian Independent Commission for Human Rights signed a memorandum of understanding in April 2018 to cooperate more systematically on the operationalization of the human rights-based approach to data, which includes cooperating on the development, compilation and dissemination of human rights indicators, such as Sustainable Development Goals indicators on violence against journalists and human rights defenders, on the prevalence of discrimination and on conflict-related deaths.

30. The Government of Mexico, the National Institute of Statistics and Geography and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) agreed to establish a Global Centre of Excellence on Gender Statistics to pool efforts in the fields of research, innovation, cooperation, and exchange of experiences for the effective adaptation, implementation and monitoring of international commitments on women's rights and gender equality. Hosted by the National Institute of Statistics and Geography, the Centre of Excellence will benefit substantially from the National Institute's experience, leadership and institutional and technical capacity to promote more, and improved, gender statistics. The Centre of Excellence has the following objectives: to foster innovations through an innovation lab; to provide technical assistance and training services to national statistical offices and user communities (particularly in Central America); and

beyond Mexico and Latin America, to promote South-South and triangular cooperation through training and learning exchanges.

31. Population and housing censuses are a primary source of disaggregated data needed to formulate, implement and monitor development policies and programmes, and it is therefore of paramount importance to include the most vulnerable and marginalized groups. In Guatemala, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and OHCHR supported the National Statistics Institute with incorporating a rights-based approach to the 2018 national population and housing census, and facilitated coordination with indigenous people and people of African descent in that context. In Ghana, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), with the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice, undertook a background study on groups that are at risk of statelessness and remain uncounted in national administrative registries, and advocated for the inclusion of questions related to nationality status in the upcoming population and housing census.

D. Leaving no one behind and supporting gender equality

32. Translating the commitment to leaving no one behind in a transformative way focuses on the need to dismantle discrimination and reduce inequalities by addressing the structural root causes that keep people in poverty, and that marginalize, exclude or discriminate against them in laws, policies and social practices. Human rights technical cooperation and capacity-building can make a crucial contribution to the realization of the goals of the 2030 Agenda by unpacking the overarching principle of leaving no one behind, and promoting gender equality. Support for States' efforts to address inequalities and discrimination against women and the most left behind in their societies — through legislative, institutional and policy reforms — contributes to the removal of obstacles that impede the effective horizontal and transversal implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, as such support seeks to address the root causes of discrimination as well as the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. The following are some examples of the support being provided to States' efforts to address inequalities, including those related to addressing structural barriers: reversing unequal distributions of power, resources and opportunities; and challenging discriminatory laws, policies, social norms and gender stereotypes.

1. Gender equality and women's rights

33. Access to justice is an important driver of change and is recognized in the 2030 Agenda as a means of achieving peaceful and inclusive societies, including in Goal 16. While for women in particular, access to justice is key to breaking cycles of violence, shifting power relations and achieving empowerment and gender equality, women continue to face numerous obstacles in accessing remedies and reparations, due to structural inequalities, gender stereotyping and discrimination. Technical cooperation in that regard can therefore contribute to both Goal 5 and Goal 16.

34. In that respect, the landmark 2016 decision in the *Sepur Zarco* case in Guatemala set an important precedent. It marks a major step forward in access to justice for indigenous women, and contributes to Goal 16. For the first time in the history of Guatemala, sexual violence committed during the country's military conflict in the 1980s was successfully prosecuted, leading to the conviction of two former members of the military for the murder, rape and sexual enslavement of indigenous women. The court also ordered reparations in order to address past denials of the rights to health, education and access to land. OHCHR and UN-Women have provided support for years to help bring justice to these women, and are currently engaged in technical assistance for the implementation of the reparation measures.

35. In 2017, UN-Women worked to enhance access to legal aid for women living with HIV to reduce gender-based stigma and discrimination. In Viet Nam, for example, UN-Women helped the national network of women living with HIV to analyse specific forms of discrimination that women face in the context of HIV and to identify gender-specific

bottlenecks in access to legal aid. This analysis resulted in a set of recommendations to inform necessary amendments to the law on legal aid.

36. The Latin American model protocol for the investigation of gender-related killing of women, developed in 2014 by OHCHR and UN-Women, is a valuable tool for strengthening the capacities of judicial operators tackling investigation, prosecution and judgment of cases of femicide, and thus addressing violence against women, in line with target 5.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals. An online course on the protocol has been developed, and was rolled out in Argentina and Central American countries in 2017.

37. Technical cooperation aimed at addressing structural gender-specific discrimination, gender-based violence, harmful practices, and the lack of sexual and reproductive health care, including maternal care services, contributes to the achievement of Goal 5 on gender equality, and its effects cut across a number of other goals, in particular Goal 3 and Goal 4, as shown in the examples below.

38. In Sudan, the United Nations supported the implementation of national legislation to criminalize female genital mutilation. Female genital mutilation is currently outlawed in some Sudanese states, but the practice is still highly prevalent nationwide. United Nations advocacy and support to the National Parliament have recently led to a bill criminalizing female genital mutilation. The bill, which is aimed at amending the country's criminal law to include female genital mutilation as a crime punishable by three years' imprisonment, has been approved by the Council of Ministers and is expected to be submitted to Parliament for endorsement.

39. In Egypt, the United Nations supported the amendment of the law on female genital mutilation, which made the practice a felony rather than a misdemeanour under the Egyptian Penal Code. Support was also provided for the drafting of a law criminalizing child marriage. Kyrgyzstan, in response to recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and recommendations made as part of the universal periodic review of the country, introduced a law criminalizing child marriage, and toughened the punishment that is prescribed in the Criminal Code for bride-kidnapping.

40. In Namibia, support is provided for effective implementation of the Policy for the Prevention and Management of Learner Pregnancy, recommended by the Committee on the Rights of the Child as a means of addressing the high rate of adolescent girls dropping out of school due to pregnancy.[7] This policy allows girls to remain at school as long as possible and to return to school after childbirth, thus ensuring their access to education and to future opportunities to make a living. In 2017, UNICEF, in partnership with the Ministry of Education and with the support of the World Health Organization (WHO), UNESCO and UNFPA, conducted an extensive training programme for officials working in the area of school health, which was aimed at creating a robust understanding of the background, rationale and content of the policy. Officials who have received this training run sessions and pass on their knowledge to colleagues and implementers.

41. In Uganda, OHCHR, UNFPA and WHO worked closely with the Ministry of Health, the Uganda Human Rights Commission and civil society on the implementation of the technical guidance on preventable maternal mortality and morbidity published by OHCHR.[8] In particular, they provided technical support to the Ministry of Health for the development and elaboration of its multisectoral strategy on the application of a human rights-based approach to reduce preventable maternal mortality and morbidity. In terms of capacity-building, district-level training sessions were conducted with medical and other technical personnel on the application of the technical guidance and on sexual and reproductive health and rights.

42. Discriminatory norms and practices can be a central determinant of unequal outcomes for children. "Son preference", whereby boys are advantaged over girls with respect to educational and other opportunities, reinforces the structural imbalance in power relations in society, which perpetuates violence and discrimination against women and

[7] See CRC/C/NAM/CO/2-3, para. 63.

[8] A/HRC/21/22 and Corrs. 1 and 2.

girls. The UNFPA Global Programme to Prevent Son Preference and the Gender-Biased Sex Selection is aimed at strengthening evidence-based national policies and programmes to tackle son preference, low status of girls in society, and gender inequalities resulting in gender-biased sex selection, in countries in Asia and the Caucasus identified as having a prevalence of such practices. UNFPA bases its implementation on a comprehensive multisectoral and multi-stakeholder approach. In Armenia, for example, it supported the drafting of a national action plan for 2018–2022 and the development of methodological guidelines for data collection, data and trends analysis, together with relevant national research institutes; training programmes for health professionals; capacity-building of local NGOs to design programmes to curb gender-biased sex selection and to promote gender equality; and public education programmes.

43. The United Nations in Costa Rica organized the first female Central American hackathon, aimed at promoting women's empowerment in the realization of the 2030 Agenda and increasing Central American women's participation in fostering solutions and decision-making processes by developing capacity and leadership conditions for young women in the technology sector. The hackathon was designed in collaboration with the Ministry of Public Education, the Ministry of Science and Technology, academia, civil society, the private sector and women, and brought together a diversity of stakeholders. It was focused on Goal 11 and Goal 13, to generate innovative solutions to address challenges related to urban sustainability, taking into account women's needs and demands. One hundred and eighty young women from Costa Rica and the region took part, 60 per cent of whom were from rural areas, and were offered follow-up alternatives, such as technical advice to finalize their prototype, continued technical training in subjects related to innovation and technology, and opportunities for professional training for careers in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics sector.

2. Children

44. Birth registration is a first step towards safeguarding individual rights and providing every person with access to justice and social services. Unregistered children face significant challenges with respect to accessing education and health services. Support provided by the United Nations system to States in this respect contributes to the implementation of Goal 16 but also Goal 4.

45. In Kosovo** in 2017, UNHCR and UNICEF designed a joint strategy in support of the Coalition on Every Child's Right to Nationality, to advocate for and support the authorities in three areas, namely enforcement of the current legal system; the creation of a new mechanism for systematic solutions for unregistered children and adults; and direct legal support for children affected, from all communities, especially Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children. As a result, around 300 children have now had their birth registered, and consequently have access to all associated social rights. Birth registration is a precondition for social inclusion and access to rights for the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. As a result of the continuous advocacy, the authorities in Kosovo have initiated work on creating a mechanism for systematic solutions, which will be at the core of the national action plan to identify and reduce the number of unregistered persons that is to be endorsed in 2018. In Kazakhstan, UNHCR and UNICEF are aiming to promote revision of the national legislation related to birth registration to bring it into compliance with international standards and ensure that all children are registered at birth regardless of the legal status of their parents.

3. Persons with albinism

46. Since the end of 2014, an increase in attacks, killings and abductions has been reported in Malawi, targeted at persons with albinism. The visit in 2016 of the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of human rights by persons with albinism brought about heightened attention to the human rights situation faced by persons with albinism and gave

** References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

rise to a number of recommendations. In follow-up to the Independent Expert's visit, the United Nations designed a comprehensive programme to strengthen protection of the human rights of persons with albinism, which included advocacy and awareness-raising, support for community-based protection mechanisms, a study on the root causes of the attacks, training and training materials for prosecutors and investigators, and capacity-building for the Association of Persons with Albinism, as well as education and health interventions. With United Nations support, the Government adopted an albinism action plan, which has enabled multisectoral work, putting persons with albinism at the forefront of the design and delivery of interventions, and introduced legislation with new crimes and harsher penalties. Support was provided for the collection of disaggregated data, as part of the 2018 census. Awareness of the need to protect persons with albinism has increased within communities and within the police, including through community policing forums. The programme involves OHCHR, UN-Women, UNICEF and UNDP, in partnership with the Government, civil society, the police, local authorities and traditional leaders. Remaining challenges include changing harmful cultural norms and beliefs, bringing the instigators of crimes to justice, the cross-border nature of the crimes and the frequent family involvement in them, and the low level of awareness of albinism. Notwithstanding these challenges, United Nations interventions have contributed to a downward trend in the number of attacks against persons with albinism: in the first six months of 2017, three murders were reported, as opposed to seven in the same period in 2016.

4. Persons with disabilities

47. Following the ratification by Belarus of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the United Nations in Belarus supported the preparation process for a national action plan, spearheaded by the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, aimed at inclusive implementation of the Convention. Joint efforts by UNDP, the Ministry of Information and civil society organizations have resulted in the adoption of an information strategy on disability. Furthermore, within the framework of the National Action Plan for Improving the Situation of Children and Protection of their Rights for 2017–2021, UNICEF in Belarus has been focusing on the most vulnerable groups of children, paying particular attention to the cross-cutting issues of disability, violence and adolescence.

48. In Jordan, with the technical support of WHO, the Ministry of Health developed the Mental Health and Substance Use Action Plan 2018–2021 to achieve target 3.5 of the Sustainable Development Goals. The action plan is in line with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities — representing a major step forward in improving the lives of people with mental disabilities. The action plan aims to avoid, as much as possible, services provided through mental health institutions, which are associated with numerous human rights violations and poor health outcomes; rather, it promotes full inclusion and participation in community life and access to quality health-care services as close as possible to people's homes. This has important implications in terms of deinstitutionalization and the development of community-based mental health and social services.

5. Third gender, non-binary, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people

49. In 2015, Cabo Verde became the first African country to implement the OHCHR-led Free and Equal public information campaign at the national level. The implementation involved the United Nations country team, under the coordination of UN-Women, and brought together the Cabo Verdean Institute for Gender Equality and Equity, the National Commission for Human Rights and Citizenship, and civil society. Based on the principle of leaving no one behind, has contributed to public visibility of discrimination and violence affecting lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons. Changing people's level of awareness and advocating to eliminate barriers affecting the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex community are the driving objectives of the campaign, which is being put into action through awareness-raising and advocacy campaigns, knowledge-sharing, and the mobilization of youth. Current efforts of the campaign include activities that will contribute to eliminating bullying of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex adolescents and youth.

50. In Pakistan, the Resident Coordinator's Office, UNDP, ILO, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and UN-Women provided support for the development of a responsive policy to protect the transgender community through policy reform, legislation and the establishment of protection mechanisms. In collaboration with the National Commission for Human Rights, the United Nations supported a comprehensive series of consultations with transgender persons and groups, human rights organizations and relevant government stakeholders from the four provinces, on developing legislation to protect transgender persons in Pakistan, and provided technical assistance for its drafting. The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Bill was approved by the Senate in March 2018 and by the National Assembly in May 2018. The bill applies a definition of the term "transgender" that is inclusive of people with gender identities beyond the binary concept of male and female. Notably, it reaffirms guarantees of all fundamental rights outlined in the Constitution to transgender persons, provides for official recognition of a person's gender identity without requiring consent from a medical board, prohibits discrimination, and lays out penalties for acts of discrimination and violence against transgender persons. The United Nations assisted in dialogue and consultation and supported transgender persons' organizations in advocating and engaging with legislators at the federal and provincial levels, and has advocated for specific measures for protection and respect of the rights of transgender persons in a number of areas, such as health care, education, access to training and employment, and protection measures. Legislative and policy reforms in the four provinces are currently being introduced, which are aimed at destigmatizing and ensuring inclusion. Furthermore, the National Commission for Human Rights is planning the establishment of a help desk that will provide legal aid, assistance in access to social security and information for transgender persons. UNDP and UNAIDS are planning measures to assist communities in Pakistan that face higher levels of vulnerability and exclusion, on account of their gender identities, in accessing expeditious, timely and comprehensive social justice.

6. Anti-drug policy, the Sustainable Development Goals and human rights

51. It is noted in the outcome document of the special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem[9] that efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and to effectively address the world drug problem are complementary and mutually reinforcing. The document signals a shift to drug control by adopting a cross-cutting human rights-based approach and establishing linkages to key priorities of the United Nations system, including the Sustainable Development Goals. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) supported the Government of Myanmar in developing a new national drug policy, guided by the outcome document and the Sustainable Development Goals, making Myanmar the first country in South-East Asia to adopt, at the national level, the framework derived from the special session. Under the new national drug policy, a people- and health-based approach is adopted, and the priority areas identified are supply reduction and alternative development, drug demand reduction and harm reduction, international cooperation, research and analysis, and compliance with human rights. Furthermore, in order to advance the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, specifically Goal 3, and the promotion of human rights, the new policy recognizes the importance of drug treatment in prisons and recommends investment in prison reform to address prison management and improve access to prison health services, including drug treatment service. UNODC, UNAIDS and WHO are also spearheading a project on the improvement of health in prisons. On 17 April 2018, Myanmar released more than 6,000 prisoners who had been convicted for drugs offences. The recent amendment of the drugs law and the new drugs policy had an impact on the decision by the President to pardon prisoners convicted of drug-related offences. Similar initiatives are under way in Colombia and Tunisia.

[9] General Assembly resolution S-30/1, annex.

E. Participation and inclusiveness for sustainability of achievements

Inclusiveness and social dialogue

52. Technical assistance on human rights in the framework of social dialogue can contribute to reaching agreements based on human rights and meaningful participation, and to advancing economic, cultural, political and social rights. OHCHR intervened in several social protests, facilitating dialogue among the parties, diminishing tensions and supporting the implementation of the agreements reached, by providing methodological support and technical assistance on human rights.

53. The above-mentioned approach was particularly useful in ending the civil strike in Buenaventura, Colombia. The "civil strike to live in dignity and peace" erupted in May 2017. Significant numbers of the population of this major port city took part in the strike, which was fuelled by the continued lack of access to drinking water and sanitation, the lack of health services in the public hospital, poor working conditions in the port facilities, and high rates of poverty and unemployment despite the commitment to invest in the city that had been announced in the context of the 2014 development strategy for the Pacific coast.

54. OHCHR acted as mediator, facilitated dialogue between parties, and provided support in the negotiation process between the Government and the executive committee of the strike — in particular by providing technical assistance on human rights which allowed the parties to move forward and to reach agreements in line with international standards, for example with regard to the rights to health care and access to land, and to including an ethnic and cultural perspective. In coordination with the Office of the Prosecutor General, OHCHR ensured that the proposals and agreements corresponded to concrete measures, addressed the principal demands of the strikers and included specific mechanisms to guarantee the fulfilment of agreements. OHCHR is providing methodological support for the thematic secretariats established as part of the agreement to end the strike, which offer an important space for community participation in the designing of human rights policies. For example, the municipality agreed to engage in a consultation process on the municipal land management plan with the community of African descent and ensure the community's free, prior and informed consent. Furthermore, an autonomous fund was established that will be key to implementing policies that are aimed at fulfilling economic and social rights, and have an ethnic and gender perspective — which are essential on the path to ensuring that no one is left behind in development.

IV. Conclusions

55. With the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, States entered a pivotal phase in which a new transformative vision for development was articulated. Firmly grounded in international human rights standards, the 2030 Agenda strives to leave no one behind and puts the imperative of equality and non-discrimination at its heart.

56. The examples identified in the present report are just some illustrations of the types of United Nations technical cooperation that are assisting States in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, fully in line with their international human rights commitments. A major element of technical cooperation is aimed at assisting Member States in fulfilling the pledge to leave no one behind and act on the imperative to have more systematic data disaggregation to help achieve and measure the Goals. The United Nations, including OHCHR, has developed guidance tools to support policymakers, statisticians and data specialists in government agencies, national human rights institutions, equality bodies and civil society organizations to contribute to this effort, which includes guidance on a human rights approach to data. In a number of countries, technical assistance has led to the development of human rights indicators that are linked to the Sustainable Development Goals and contribute to monitoring progress towards the fulfilment of the Goals. In order to support States in acting on the imperative to collect and publish data disaggregated by grounds of discrimination, capacities are being built and partnerships developed. Bringing together data producers and data users improves coherence and ensures that reports on the Sustainable Development Goals are rigorous, data-based and evidence-based. A major

breakthrough in this respect is the technical cooperation for the development of partnerships with national statistics offices, which is being replicated in a number of countries.

57. The United Nations system is putting in place a comprehensive framework to support Member States in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Solid experience has been gained with technical cooperation and capacity-building aimed at mainstreaming human rights into development planning. This is now evolving to respond to the objectives of the 2030 Agenda and the challenges involved in realizing them, including via a new generation of United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks that knit together Sustainable Development Goals and human rights recommendations in order to ensure coherent technical assistance. The efforts to have better access to the recommendations generated by the international human rights mechanisms, namely by treaty bodies, special procedures and the universal periodic review, in a holistic manner, and clearly identifying their specific relevance to the efforts for achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, have been acknowledged by numerous States as important and useful, including for the strengthening of policy coherence and to follow up on and review both human rights obligations and development goals.

58. Addressing root causes, inequalities and discrimination will contribute to removing structural obstacles to the full realization of the Sustainable Development Goals and to building peaceful, inclusive and more equitable societies that leave no one behind. Therefore, the United Nations system is also supporting States in addressing discrimination against women and marginalized groups within their societies, through technical cooperation aimed at eliminating discriminatory laws and practices and by designing inclusive programmes and action plans. Recommendations of human rights mechanisms, guidance materials developed under the aegis of the Human Rights Council, guiding principles and technical guidance, and tools such as model laws and protocols, can assist in these efforts, and in making progress both at cross-cutting levels and on specific Goals, as noted in the examples in the present report.

59. The efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals certainly open new and innovative avenues for the further realization of human rights in practical terms, and vice versa. As shown in the present report, successful human rights technical cooperation programmes can provide blueprints that can be replicated in other countries, including by involving Member States in technical cooperation and the sharing of good practice, such as the ongoing cooperation projects of Paraguay to support the establishment of online databases based on SIMORE Plus. Furthermore, the use of new technologies, such as the hackathon described above, opens new avenues to give voice to people to propose solutions to the problems they face in their communities, to promote the participation of people in achieving sustainable development in the context in which they live, and to generate a real commitment to the 2030 Agenda.

60. Technical cooperation and capacity-building will be a critical vehicle in supporting and contributing to the effective and inclusive implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and of national development objectives, and in ensuring that these are fully aligned with human rights standards and obligations as requested by Member States in this transformative vision for development.